1: Belgrave F-3 (no date) 1953 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

Part III.—AROUND BAHRAIN.

MANAMA

361 THE capital of Bahrain, Manama, with a population, in 1950, of 39,648, is situated on the low lying coast at the north end of Bahrain Island. Most parts of the town are only two or three feet above sea level and close below the ground there is brackish water which accounts for the excessive humidity during the summer. The town extends for 1½ miles along the northern shore and about the same distance down the east coast. Although Manama, which means "The Place of Sleeping," is known to have existed in the 15th century and is mentioned by the Portuguese, it contains no ancient buildings, and possibly the oldest relic of the past is the tomb of Shaikh Ahmed al-Khalifah, who conquered Bahrain in 1782, situated near the Awal Cinema.

[103]

The most attractive view of Manama is from the sea. Approaching the port from Saudi Arabia one sees a long line of tall, white houses with deep-shadowed verandahs, rising above the brilliantly coloured water. Around the Customs Pier, which extends for a quarter of a mile into the sea, there are usually 70 or 80 local sailing craft and launches whose crews and cargoes fill the pier to overflowing. The skyline of the town is broken by two or three minarets, the tallest being that of the Juma Mosque, while on the shore to the east of the town can be seen the graceful wind-towers which were used to catch the breeze before the days of electric fans and air-conditioning.

342 Most of the houses are built from coral stone, quarried from the bed of the sea at low tide, plastered and painted white. A noticeable feature of Bahrain architecture is the use of large flat sheets of coral stone set between masonry pillars in the walls of the houses. In some districts of the town there are still numbers of "barastis", huts made of palm branches, but these are rapidly being replaced by stone and cement houses.

361 The centre of the town is Shaikh Sulman Square with, on the north,
344 the Pier and the Customs premises and on the south "Bab al-Bahrain," the Gate of Bahrain, a large block of Government offices with an archway in the centre leading through to the principal street in the bazaar. In the centre of the Square is a circular garden, the walls of which are made from cement panels decorated with traditional Bahraini designs, arabesques, of pleasing appearance. The bazaar extends for some
366 distance on each side of Barrett Road, the main street. To its west
443 are the Municipal Buildings and an open market where, on Wednesday mornings, the people of the villages bring their produce to sell.

The Manama bazaar rightly claims to be the emporium of the Gulf, it contains both narrow streets of picturesque little shops, full

361 when the date pickers descend on the village and put up their barastis.
295 Lower Sehlah is reached by a bridge across the water channel that borders the Manama-Awali Road. This village is surrounded by date gardens and can also be reached by a footpath from Adari. The gardens in the neighbourhood of the two villages are among the best and most thriving in Bahrain, and the date groves are locally described as the hump of Bahrain, not because they rise above the surrounding lands but on account of their being the richest and most fertile in the islands.

AALI

361 After leaving the palm belt and entering the plain north of Rifaa, thick smoke can usually be seen rising from among some date gardens to the west, this is the village of Aali, one of the largest in Bahrain. It lies on the western edge of the plain which extends from the end of the date gardens at the bridge of Radhm al-Qawari to the Rifaa hills, and is close to a group of the largest tumuli in Bahrain which are a conspicuous feature of the landscape of Bahrain island. The largest mounds in the Aali group are over 80 feet high and 100 feet in diameter.
[491] The best road to Aali is the one indicated by the sign-post on Awal
[542] Road, a short distance from Radhm al-Qawari. The houses of this village are better than in most of the Bahrain villages; they are large and airy and some of them have blocks of stone from the tombs in their walls. As in the case of so many Bahrain villages, Aali stands on a slight elevation surrounded by date gardens.

RIFAA AL-GHARBI

644 Straddling Awal Road on the edge of the rim-rock is the town of
361 West Rifaa, the winter residence of H.H. The Ruler of Bahrain as well as of many of his family and retainers. This settlement is comparatively modern, having been built by the present Ruler before he succeeded in 1942. Constructed in the traditional Arab pattern, the Palace is in the centre of the town and the other houses are widely scattered about it. The Ruler's love of gardens has caused the road to be lined with trees, and it is a pleasant surprise on coming across the desert surrounding the town to pass through a shady green avenue. During the three months of the Summer the Ruler lives in Manama, but as soon as the cool weather returns a long procession of cars and lorries moves slowly out of Rifaa, the lights go on, and overnight the appearance of West Rifaa is changed from a deserted town to a scene of much activity.

RIFAA ASH-SHARQI

361 This is the fourth largest town in Bahrain and has a population
712 of about 3,000. East Rifaa is without doubt the most picturesque of Bahrain's towns and villages. When approached from the west, from the plain near Awali, the fortress, which domin.tes the valley, presents a most romantic appearance and carries one's thoughts back

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laughter comes from the Club House Swimming Bath and in the evenings sports of all kinds take place inside the camp. Today Awali is a town of some 400 houses inhabited by 2,000 Europeans and Americans. Shady trees line the roads and in fact there is little to suggest the presence of oil. The roads are surfaced with it, but otherwise it is not visible, though oil is the *raison d'etre* of this town set in such an inhospitable situation, to which water has to be piped from miles away and where to plant a tree a pneumatic drill is required to pierce the rock on which the town is built.

SAKHIR

Driving from Awali to Zellaq the traveller will notice a group of large buildings on the south of the road near the foot of the Jebal. This is Sakhir, founded by Shaikh Muhammad bin Khalifa (1843-67, d. 1890), but the majority of buildings which exist today were built by the late Ruler of Bahrain. The present Ruler makes little use of Sakhir, and the attractive mosques, balconied dwelling houses and high roofed rooms are now deserted ; the only human beings who remain are the Bedouin in charge of the horses and camels which are still kept there. The climate of Sakhir is excellent and in the spring there are fields of grass which provide grazing both for domestic animals, gazelle and hare. When Sakhir was occupied Saluqis were much in evidence, Shaikh Hamed was a great lover of this fine breed of dogs and his favourite hound, Housha, followed him wherever he went. It should be remembered that Sakhir is the private property of the Ruler, from whom permission must be obtained before it is visited.

JEBAL AD-DUKHAN

The "Mountain" of Bahrain has already been mentioned in the Introduction, but it deserves further notice. From its peak, which is marked by a trigonometry marker, it is possible to see, on a clear day, the entire area of Bahrain from Manama and Muharraq on the north to Ras al-Barr, while on the east and west the sea is even nearer. From the peak an excellent bird's eye view of Awali can be seen, and, at night, the flares at Dhahran and at Dukhan in Qatar are visible. The strange formation of the island, with the rim-rock and the central depression can be seen from the Jebal. At the head of a wadi facing towards Awali is the Jebal cave, some 15 × 35 × 6 ft., which is hollowed out of the rock, probably by water erosion for the fantastic patterns on the walls would seem to point to nature's rather than man's handiwork.

JAW AND DOUR (DAR AL-MANADI.)

On the east coast of Bahrain about a mile south of the highest peak of the Jebal are the villages of Dour and Jaw, similar in character and appearance and the southernmost inhabited villages on the east coast of Bahrain. The villages are about a mile apart and both are on the shore, they consist of a poor type of stone and gypsum hut inhabited

two quarters still spoken of as North and South Budaiya. It was the home of the Dawasir tribe who came to Bahrain shortly after it was conquered by the al-Khalifah and established themselves here. The tribe acquired great wealth and prestige, owning many pearling dhows, and by degrees they became so powerful that they were able to raid with impunity the neighbouring Bahrana villages. They even challenged the authority of the al-Khalifah, but Shaikh Hamed, on becoming Deputy Ruler in 1924, threatened to punish them if they did not behave. This they considered as an infringement of their liberties and they therefore announced to the Ruler that if he prevented them behaving as they were accustomed, they would leave Bahrain and settle in Saudi Arabia. Shaikh Hamed refused to give way and the Dawasir left Bahrain. This, however, was not the last of them, for during many years it was believed that they were preparing to invade Bahrain. To prevent this a force was maintained in the Islands. However, the scare eventually died down and Budaiya after lying deserted, was later partly re-occupied by other Bahrainis, while some of the Dawasir gradually returned, many of them settling in Manama and Muharraq.

The ruins of great houses and mosques still remain, while scattered between them are the houses of the new inhabitants, who do much fishing in the prolific waters near the town, and also work in Manama and Awali. Before reaching the Police Post that marks the entrance to Budaiya the road passes through the Government Experimental Garden where new agricultural methods are tried and where cows and sheep, kept under scientific conditions, are studied for their productivity. From the Budaiya Pier launches go to Jidda, the prison island, many of whose inmates come over daily to work in the Budaiya Garden. The Pier is also used by the Ruler when he visits his island of Umm an-Nasaan.

The small Government school at Budaiya just south of the Government gardens, in addition to teaching the usual Primary School subjects gives lessons in agriculture for many of the boys' fathers own or work in gardens in the neighbourhood.

DIRAZ

Diraz is a village about half a mile north of the Budaiya Road and about 1½ miles from Budaiya itself. It consists mainly of stone houses, many of which are two-storied. The village stands on high ground among the sand dunes and is very similar to Beni Jumra which faces it a little way off on the opposite side of the road. It is so surrounded by clumps of date palms that its size is not appreciated from the road. A feature noticeable here, as well as in many other parts of Bahrain, is that date palms grow in groups at the bottom of depressions in the sand and are not irrigated by water channels but obtain moisture from below the surface of the ground.

North-west of the village there are mounds which indicate the existence of a much larger settlement in the past and an extensive area of ground is covered with glass and pottery sherds. Among the ruins

ZELLAQ

361 South again of Malakiya is Zellaq, the southernmost village on the
342 western Coast of Bahrain and approximately three miles west of Sakhir. A road runs from Zellaq to Awali and is much used by BAPCO employees coming to swim at the former place. The houses of Zellaq village, which are of stone, are built along the shore and many of them are large and spacious. As a result of the activities of BAPCO, Zellaq village has increased in size and prosperity and now contains a number of substantial white stone buildings which are conspicuous from a long distance across the flat and sandy plain that surrounds it.

162 The inhabitants of Zellaq are Sunni Arabs; some are from the Dawasir tribe, and many of them are dependents of the Ruling Family.
311 North of the village there are a number of large gardens, irrigated by innumerable artesian wells, which are owned by members of the Ruling Family and by their servants; these gardens form a green belt along the two miles of coast between Zellaq and Sedad.

512 The Bahrain Petroleum Company has a pump house at Zellaq which supplies Awali with much of its water and Zellaq was also once the discharging point for tankers bringing crude oil from Saudi
517 Arabia, before the submarine pipe-line was laid. Near the pumping station is the BAPCO Plage, the excellent bathing place which is much used by the employees of BAPCO, particularly in the Summer evenings.

RAS AL-BARR

521 This, the southernmost point of the Bahrain islands, is a popular
481 place for summer picnics, but the approaches to it are difficult, and although never dangerous they can easily cause trouble to visitors by
191 the softness of the sand. It is best to travel in parties with not less than two cars, so that one can come to the help of the other if necessary, and care should be taken to keep to the tracks, however faintly indicated rather than to carve out new roads in the desert. The road to Ras al-Barr from Zellaq first passes through Mutalla, the Ruler's hunting lodge, while that from Awali past the Jebel passes another hunting lodge at Rumaitha before joining the Western road at Akala. From here the road goes south, past the swamps on the coast and along the narrow strip of sand which marks the end of the island.

136 In certain seasons of the year the shores along this part of Bahrain
262 are covered with the eggs of sea-birds, and many Arab dhows anchor off the coast while the crews remove the eggs for food. If one is lucky, while driving down the coast, hare and gazelle may be seen, as well as rose-tinted flamingoes on the shore.

MUHARRAQ ISLAND

MUHARRAQ

491 The visitor from Manama approaches Muharraq by crossing the
486 1½ mile long causeway and Shaikh Hamed Bridge, completed in 1942,

which opens at 11 a.m. and at midnight, for an hour, to allow the passage of vessels through the deep channel between the two islands. There is a toll gate at the bridge and cars coming from Muharraq to Manama are charged 4 annas. Beyond the bridge, around a group of white buildings, the Customs House, Police Station and Municipal Office, there is always a scene of much activity. Here boats unload their cargoes and buses fill with passengers bound for all parts of the Islands. The sea road continues along the water front until it turns inland towards the airport. Much of the ground inside the sea road has not yet been reclaimed and at high tide the sea forms little squares of still water where children sail home-made boats. On Muharraq sea front there are several important buildings, a government dispensary, a large school and, at the northern corner, a block of flats.

Another road, opposite the causeway, runs up into the town passing through the bazaars, which branch off to the north and south. The Muharraq shops are of the old fashioned type, with neither plate glass nor fixed prices. There are antique dealers and carpet sellers and all the usual traders found in Arab towns. Ships chandlers are numerous as Muharraq has always been a sea faring centre. Arab chests, carved or brass bound, carpets, worked leather sandals, divers' equipment and goods of interest to tourists can be bought here at prices lower after judicious bargaining, than those in Manama.

Today Muharraq is still a typically Arab town, a fact of which its inhabitants are proud. Most of the shops are owned by Arabs and are not occupied by Indians or Persians as in Manama. The town, although it was once the capital of Bahrain, the centre of the pearl industry and the focus of trade (a fact that its inhabitants remember with pride) has developed more slowly than Manama. There are few modern buildings, only one cinema and no large European style shops, but its climate is said to be pleasanter than Manama and it is not so humid in the summer. Muharraq was once a walled town but no traces of the walls now remain. The high old houses which line the narrow streets have changed little during the last century, except where corners have been cut away to make passages for large American cars. Many of the larger houses belong to the Ruling Family. They are built around courtyards and in some cases a big house contains three or four such courtyards, surrounded by high walls with few outward-looking windows in them to screen the house from prying eyes.

Muharraq has a telephone service, electric light, a Post Office and a filling station, but no main water supply, apart from artesian wells. As in the case of Manama, the affairs of the town are controlled by an elected Municipal Council presided over by a member of the Ruling Family.

The sea surrounds the town on three sides but at the northern end a new residential area is developing on land which is being sold by the Municipality for building purposes. East of the town is the bay of Arad, the ancient name for Muharraq at the time of Alexander,

LITERACY

212 An effort was made to ascertain the number of literates.
162 In addition to people who were educated at Government and private schools those who had learned to read and write at Quran schools were counted as literate. The first Government school was opened in 1919 and during the last twenty years the number of schools for boys and girls has steadily increased. Persons registered as literate amounted to 14,057. If Europeans and Indians were deducted from this total there remain about 10,000 literates among the local population of 105,000, approximately 10% of the indigenous population being literate. This percentage, for Bahrain, is not low.

HOUSES

362 All occupied houses were numbered and counted; in some cases a "house" consisted of one small hut, in other cases it was a building occupied by thirty or forty members and hangers-on of one family. Empty houses, of which there were none in Manamah and few in Muharraq, were not included. The number of houses in Manamah was 8,703 and in Muharraq 3,790; in the first census the numbers were 4,051 and 3,155 respectively. In nine years 1,600 new houses have been built in Manamah and 800 in Muharraq. In both towns the proportion of stone houses has increased considerably. The figures for houses in the villages are less accurate, it was often difficult to determine where one dwelling, consisting of a group of huts in a compound, ended and the next dwelling began. The census showed 6,232 houses in the villages and islands as against 5,575 in 1941. Taking the whole population and the number of houses, the average number of persons occupying one house was 6½.

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REVIEW OF 1372

000 The two most important events during the year were the conclusion of a new oil agreement between the Government and the Bahrain Petroleum Company and His Highness Shaikh Sulman's first visit to Europe to attend the coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

471 651 439 The new oil agreement was on a 50—50 basis on the same lines as other agreements which have recently been made between governments and oil companies in the Middle East, it also provided for a payment to the State on oil imported into Bahrain for refining. As a result of this agreement the total revenue for the year under review was 373½ lakhs of rupees, approximately £2,800,000, though the new scale of payments was not in operation throughout the whole of 1372.

652 657 Expenditure was higher than in 1371. Excluding the one third of the oil revenue, which is paid to the Privy Purse, 48 per cent. of the State's expenditure was on social and public services; Education, Public Health, Public Protection and grants to Municipalities absorbed 18½ per cent., 15-3/8 per cent., 10-4/5 per cent., and 3 per cent. respectively, including capital expenditure on new schools, dispensaries and police quarters. The demand for more schools and hospitals is continuous and insistent but few Bahrain people realise the heavy recurrent cost of medical and education services which can be maintained on the present scale only as long as the present revenue continues.

651 511 342 471 Trade flourished and the revenue from customs was higher than in the previous year; during recent years customs collections have risen annually. Local prosperity was apparent from what might be described as a building boom. Many new houses and shops were built in the towns and suburbs by private enterprise. The type of house varied from European style bungalows and blocks of flats, built by merchants and shaikhs for letting, to small stone houses which are gradually replacing barastis, palm branch huts. Several serious fires in barasti areas, which destroyed many dwellings, gave an impetus to building. Working men who owned pieces of ground built small houses and the Government received hundreds of applications from people who wished to buy building plots. Unfortunately the Government owns very little land in and around the towns, much of it having been given away or sold cheaply many years ago.

511 167 161 The standard of living in Bahrain is very much higher than it was a few years ago and the health of the people is noticeably better than it used to be. For these reasons and owing to a steady influx of foreigners, mostly from Oman and the Trucial Coast, who come to Bahrain to work, it is believed that there has been a substantial increase in the population which at the time of the last census, in 1950, was found to be 110,000.

578 The state of public security was good in spite of the presence of large a number of foreigners who are not as naturally law abiding as the people of Bahrain. There were no political or labour disturbances.

648 439 Relations with Quatar deteriorated owing to incidents connected with the visit of a party of Bahrain schoolboys and school teachers to Zubara during the Spring holiday. The commercial development of Qatar tended to reduce Bahrain's transit trade and deprived some of the Bahrain merchants of agencies which used to include both Bahrain and Qatar. Relations with Saudi Arabia and Iraq were friendly, a deputation headed by Shaikh Isa bin Sulman, His Highness's eldest son, represented Bahrain at the coronation of King Faisal in Baghdad.

MUNICIPALITIES

MANAMA MUNICIPALITY

(From the report of Mr. Mohamed Saleh Shater, Secretary of the Manama Municipality)

633 795 At the beginning of the year, owing to sectarian differences between Sunni and Shia members in 1371/A which caused the resignation of the Shia members, Municipal affairs were being dealt with by a committee of Sunnis. This was the situation until the middle of the year when the Government succeeded in persuading the Shia members to resume their duties on the Council. They returned on the understanding that they would serve for only one year after which an election should be held.

During the latter part of the year the Council functioned in a more or less normal manner; by shelving all matters which might cause controversy between the sects the Council succeeded in performing its duties without serious differences. The situation, however, was not satisfactory.

633 **Finance.** The Financial Committee which drew up the budget was formed from the temporary Sunni committee. Estimated revenue for 1372 was Rs. 7,04,000 and expenditure was assessed at the same figure. The actual revenue exceeded the estimate by Rs. 1,16,000, the expenditure was Rs. 61,000 more than was expected and at the end of the year a surplus of revenue over expenditure amounting to Rs. 61,000 was added to the Reserve which was then Rs. 2,83,000.

651 427 The increase in revenue was due to a great extent to higher receipts from house and shop taxes. There were many new buildings in the town and higher rents were charged for existing buildings, both for houses and shops. House taxes and shop taxes on buildings which are leased are charged on a percentage basis of the rent. Taxation on houses which are occupied by their owners is extremely low in comparison with that of rented premises. A large proportion of the rented houses are occupied by foreigners and most of the houses in which the owners live are occupied by people of the country.

425 653 368 During the year the Municipality sold land to the public at the price of Rs. 35,200 and it purchased a new fire engine for Rs. 48,000. The Government presented to the Municipality a motor-driven trailer fire pump and jeep, a rubbish carrying vehicle and a gully emptying vehicle.

364 **Municipal activities.** Town cleaning was effected during the year by two trucks and 30 donkey carts, town rubbish was utilised to reclaim a large portion of sea on the shore at Hora, opposite Cable and Wireless premises. The method of employing donkey carts to carry town refuse is not a satisfactory one. An order was placed in England during the summer for small rubbish-carrying vehicles which can be used in narrow streets.

368 A number of roads in the town were metalled, the area dealt with was about 300,000 square feet on which was used 480,000 cubic feet of stone and 105,000 cubic feet of sand, the whole costing approximately Rs. 1,76,000.

363 247 Some progress was made in widening streets in the bazaar area, 112 new street lights were installed and more trees were planted on the roads, unfortunately each year a number of trees are destroyed, by wind or sometimes by rain which when it falls strongly seems to kill both plants and trees.

362 427 There was much building activity both in the town and on the outskirts of the town, numbers of small houses were built for occupation by their owners and more European style bungalows and flats were built for letting. House rents are excessively high, landlords expect to recover the cost of their property in less than ten years, so building houses for letting is at present a profitable investment. However, so many houses are now being built that it seems possible that in a short time there may be more houses than tenants.

633 342 During the year permits for new buildings were issued by the Municipality for 144 stone houses and 100 barasti huts and permits for repairs and additions to 186 shops and 717 houses were also granted.

1 [AD 1951-52 -- Analyst]

[Muharraq Municipality]

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There was a small increase in house tax collections but the sum of Rs. 3,370/-, owing to the Municipality, was written off as most of the 853 persons who were indebted had left Bahrain, which suggests some laxity on the part of tax collectors. Shop taxes, including market tax, produced less than in 1371. Shops are divided into two categories and pay Rs. 2/- and Rs. 1/8 per month, which is a very low rate, they should be assessed according to the rentals.

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The total expenditure was Rs. 3,23,600, it was Rs. 66,000 less than the estimated expenditure but exceeded the previous year's expenditure by Rs. 83,000. The largest item of expenditure was on widening roads and most of this amount was spent on compensating house owners for cutting part of their property.

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Municipal Activities. Two roads were surfaced with cold patch and another road was metalled and surfaced by the P.W.D., 58 new street lights were installed. The usual town cleaning services were effectively carried out and Municipal Officials were active in supervising the sale of fresh fruit and in inspecting animals in the slaughterhouse.

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During the year 16 new stone houses were built and 1,500 permits were issued for repairing stone houses and shops. Only 53 permits were issued for building or repairing baristis, as against 200 in the previous year. There were 285 unoccupied houses and compounds.

There was some building activity on the northern edge of the town where building plots have been bought from the Government and from the Municipality by persons wishing to build stone houses.

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On his return from England His Highness decided that a public garden should be made on the north side of Muharraq on a large triangular piece of land which was reclaimed from the sea shore by being filled with town rubbish.

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The Finance Committee at the end of the year again submitted a budget showing an anticipated deficit of Rs. 86,000.

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE. 1372

Revenue				Expenditure			
House Tax	Rs. 41,169	3	9	Staff Salaries	Rs. 72,698	3	6
Shop Tax	23,860	9	0	Office Expenditure	3,450	0	0
Government Grant	1,00,000	0	0	Transport	41,010	0	6
H.H. Grant*	1,00,000	0	0	Upkeep of Roads	55,874	7	0
Wood, Char and Sheep Tax	26,673	3	6	Widening of Roads	91,834	4	0
Rent of Municipal property	20,731	5	0	Town Cleaning	43,050	8	6
Building and Matoc fees	3,928	8	0	Town Lighting	4,531	1	0
Miscellaneous Taxes and Fees	9,248	7	0	Upkeep of Public Wells	2,180	6	0
Water Rent	1,699	0	0	Pauper Burials	5,104	0	0
				Miscellaneous Fees	3,190	3	0
				Upkeep of Municipal Property	373	12	0
				Poor Relief	381	2	0
					Rs. 3,23,678	0	6
				Surplus of Revenue	3,632	3	9
	Rs. 3,27,310	4	3		Rs. 3,27,310	4	3

*Rs. 70,859/- was paid direct to the Government to settle its outstanding account.

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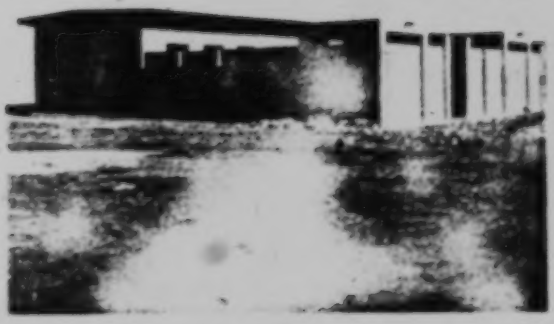

A workman's house built by Government.

"Barasti" dwellings

facing page 52

653 As usual, the activities of the Department[1] were diverse and far-reaching. The chief "new" construction works consisted of the completion of flats for investment at Muharraq and Rafaa Road ; offices in Barrett Road ; quarters for masters over the Technical School Workshop ; new private wards at the Hospital, the carrying on of work to the new Palace and additional quarters for masters over the Technical School itself, and the starting of a block of Staff Quarters at Quarantine site, Quadabiya. Very extensive works were also carried out for Customs ; four more stores sheds being erected, a large area of sea reclaimed, and a new jetty for local craft being started. For this Department, several other smaller, but important, works were also done. A larger amount than usual of simple construction work was let to contractors, including 36 workmen's houses, 43 houses for the Police, and various village dispensaries. It is argueable if the results are really satisfactory, and although money may be saved, it is possible only at the expense of a good standard of work. As usual, much work was done for the Electricity Department ; and agricultural development was greatly assisted. The amount of maintenance and decorating was, needless to say, higher than ever before ; and it has to be admitted that over this the Department failed, to some extent, to give a really good service. Fair service was given, but often the quality of work was indifferent. The construction of new roads and pavements, and the maintenance of those existing was energetically carried on. The main water supply was operated very successfully. A much larger amount of water was supplied—both to paying and non-paying consumers—and the accounts of the Water Supply Department (given later) are really encouraging.

653 177 ● 34d Every year the Department tackles a few jobs of unusual character. Of chief interest this year may be mentioned the two large roofs of the new Palace. These are of Mansard design, each 90 feet long, and with a clear span of 32 feet. Sixteen timber trusses were made, hoisted, and placed in position, 26 feet above ground, thanks to the invaluable assistance of the Bahrain Petroleum Company who kindly loaned a mobile crane with a 70 feet jib. The actual time spent on hoisting and fixing was just over twelve hours. Purlins and common rafters were fixed, and the roofs were then close-boarded, felted, counter-battened and battened. Later, green glazed pantiles were fixed. This was the first roofing job of its kind ever done in Bahrain; and it was gratifying to note how quickly the local tradesmen learned to tackle the work. The trusses were well and accurately made ; and the tiling—although done during Ramadhan and in very hot weather—took rather less than three weeks, and the result compares well with tiled roofs constructed anywhere.

000 In conclusion, 1372 has been a year of fair progress, but with some disappointing features. Much was satisfactorily accomplished ; but some results fell short of what is desirable. The very rapid expansion of the Department in the preceding five years is beginning to put a big and increasing strain on its organisation. Such success as there has been this year is largely due to excellent work done by Mr. L. Harris, Assistant to Officer-in-Charge, P.W.D. (who not only ran the Water Supply Department so well but also took charge of P.W.D. for three months at the end of the year) ; Mr. Ahmed Darwish, Office Superintendent (deservedly upgraded from Head Clerk during the year) ; a small number of hard working overseers, foremen, storekeepers and clerks and a nucleus of well proved tradesmen of long service.

Further commitments for P.W.D. are obviously bigger than ever before. To assist in meeting these, some addition to British personnel has been arranged. Extensions to the offices were built late in the year, to provide accommodation and to relieve the congestion in the old office. It is hoped that with the new staff and as a result of more local men taking courses in England, the Department will still prove capable of meeting its obligations and maintaining its tradition for good work and efficient service; and that it will continue to set an example of good workmanship and decent and appropriate design.

1 [The Public Works Department -- Analyst]

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Modern Villa in Manamah

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Street in Manamah

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Municipal Garden, Manamah

[facing p. 46B]

5: Bahrain G-5 (192/ -1937) 1937 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

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in the case of the younger generation, who have passed through the schools. This generation has grown up under a regime of settled government and accepts as a matter of course the existence of regular law courts, regulations, schools, municipalities, and other governmental institutions, though many of the comparatively recent innovations are still resented and occasionally opposed by the old conservative element, which looks back regretfully to the days of the past when, by a little influence with important people and a little judicious expenditure, they would usually get their own way and do as they liked. Education, facilities for easier travel, contact with foreigners, both at home and abroad, and the effect of newspapers, books, and broadcasting, which stimulate an interest in foreign affairs, are some of the chief causes of the changes among the people of Bahrain. Most of the changes are for the better, but the sudden influx of large numbers of Europeans belonging to the Oil Company, many of whom are unaccustomed to Eastern countries, has had minor but unfortunate results. Beggars, who in the past were comparatively unobtrusive, now throng the bazaars and thrive on the misplaced generosity of white people; and the Arab children in the streets of Manamah, who used to be well-behaved, now follow Europeans about the bazaars and make impudent remarks to them in English.

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To-day, most of the young men in Manamah wear at least one article of European dress, usually a coat, and European shoes are rapidly taking the place of sandals; socks are universally worn, and the more advanced young Arabs wear complete suits of European style, but retain their Arab headdress. Importers of second-hand clothes, ranging from tail-coats to Central European military uniforms, do a good trade. To-day, a young man wearing entirely Arab dress is usually a foreigner or one of the Shaikhs' retainers. Labourers in the oil field who work near machinery are compelled to wear shirts and trousers, and this has contributed to a large extent to the change in dress. Even among the women, there is a tendency to wear articles of European clothing, especially stockings and shoes.

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Although there is still much poverty and unemployment in Bahrain, the general standard of living has improved, and the older men often complain that their sons are no longer content with the frugal diet of fish, rice, dates and, occasionally, meat, which was good enough for them when they were young. Bread is eaten much more than it used to be, and cheap tinned fruits and biscuits have become almost part of the regular diet in the houses of the middle and wealthy classes. The decrease in food prices has made it possible for poorer people to buy more food and to enjoy more variety. Ten years ago a bag of rice cost Rs 15.-; to-day it can be bought for Rs 11/-. The price of dates has fallen almost 50%, and the public can now buy cheap vegetable ghee instead of expensive clarified butter, which used only to be used by the wealthy classes. Before artesian wells were sunk, all water had to be bought, but to-day there is an artesian well in each district of the big towns, and women of the lower classes fetch their own water from the taps and cisterns. The water supply has encouraged cleanliness, as in the past, when all water had to be bought, there was little washing or bathing except by men in the sea during the summer.

The municipalities have done much to improve conditions, both by cleaning the streets, passing regulations affecting public health, and by building markets where meat, fish, and vegetables are sold under the supervision of municipal inspectors, who are also responsible for inspecting the abattoir. These officials visit the coffee shops and 'hotels' and report cases of the sale of bad meat or stale food to the public.

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Houses. In Manamah there has been a great improvement in the style of buildings. A number of small, sanitary, and well-ventilated houses have been built by private persons for letting purposes. Though the rooms are smaller than those in the old-fashioned houses, the construction is better, the importance of proper foundations is appreciated, and cement and steel beams are universally used. A few years ago the use of steel beams was considered, locally, extremely dangerous. Most of the new houses are equipped with electric light and have adequate sanitary arrangements. By degrees the 'barasti' type of house, built of palm branches, is decreasing, and its place is being taken by stone houses which are more permanent, more healthy, and less liable to catch fire or to collapse during storms.

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Houses are more elaborately equipped. Formerly a few mats and one or two carpets were sufficient furnishing for the Meglis of a merchant, but now, in most middle-class houses, there

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The economic status of the divers is as desperate as their physical hardships. Their houses are huts which they build for themselves of woven palm leaves. Wages are paid in advance through the ship owners and financed by merchants who take profits in advance of ten or twenty per cent, according to the season. In the best diving season—from June to September—the divers have little more than enough for the barest necessities; but in the winter months when cold weather and high winds seriously impede and eventually halt their work, in order to keep alive the men have to resort to borrowing at high rates of interest, and so never get out of debt. As a consequence, condemned to a difficult, unhealthy and probably short life, the pearl diver is an inveterate gambler.

Since the abolition of the ancient Tribunal of Salifah in 1926, the captain of the boats has been required by law to keep an account of expenses and of the advances made to the divers, the taxes on which are fixed. The divers do not receive set wages, but after expenses have been deducted and the captain has taken his share of twenty per cent, the remainder is divided among the crew. The diver (*gawās*) receives twice as much as the hauler (*sib*) since his work is more dangerous. The second in command of the boat receives three parts of the profits (i.e. an amount equal to that of one diver and one hauler). He is called the Thursday, from a Persian word, probably because he is in charge of the boat on Thursdays, the captain's day off.

A comparatively recent traveler in the Near East has stated that there are occasional strikes for higher pay, though not the kind to which we are accustomed. It is the Sheik who declares the strike—and pockets the proceeds.

The diving season starts the middle of April and ends the middle of October. It is divided into five periods, the first of which, the *Ghaus al Bard*, begins the middle of April and lasts about a month. Deep sea fishing is not attempted and the divers relieve each other every half hour or so on account of the cold. The workers' share of the profits for this period is divided equally among the divers and the haulers because the latter have to

and Pakistan. Regular air communications are maintained to Iraq and Arabia, and the airport on Muharraq Island also serves international airlines with terminals in Europe, the Middle East and the Far East. Motor roads connect the towns and the villages on the different islands, and extend across causeways from Bahrain to Muharraq and Sitra. The local transport facilities are well developed, and motor bus routes link most of the population centers.

Food and Nutrition

The food habits of the diverse racial groups are varied, but serious undernutrition is seldom encountered, except among the migratory laborers from the mainland and the Baharna and Arabs in the agricultural and the fishing villages. The islands are dependent upon imports for a large proportion of their food supply. The government controls certain essential foodstuffs, as wheat, rice and sugar, and regulates prices through a system of rationing.

The diet of the average Bahraini consists of dates, bread, rice and fish, supplemented by native vegetables in season and limited amounts of meat and milk. Goats are raised in many villages, though their milk is usually scanty and poor in quality. Most of the meat is imported from Iran, and is correspondingly expensive. An assortment of fruits and vegetables is generally obtainable in Manama markets by those who are able to purchase them.

Housing

Manama is a cosmopolitan town, and the changes which have come about within the last two decades are reflected in the construction of increasing numbers of modern-type dwellings. Muharraq, in contrast, is a distinctly Arab community. Coral blocks, coral slabs and plaster are the usual building materials in the older houses, while cement is used extensively in the newer buildings. The typical Arab-style homes are built around inner courts and have utilitarian

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63;Simmons et al G-5 (1941-1951) 1954
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342 flat roofs, surrounded by parapets. Those with two or more stories sometimes have broad balconies.

342 571 In the towns, the poorer people often occupy multifamily houses in the older, congested districts or live in hut settlements on the outskirts. The huts, known locally as *barastis*, are made of bamboo or date-stick poles interwoven with palm leaves, and roofed with palm-leaf matting. They are frequently grouped within pole and matting stockades, the individual huts being separated by narrow alleys. Of the 5,703 houses 342 counted in the town of Manama at the time 511 of the 1930 census, 2,608 were of palm-leaf 361 construction. Although the standards of living have improved among the laboring classes within recent years, most of the rural inhabitants dwell under primitive conditions, as did their forefathers. Palm-leaf huts predominate in the date garden and the fishing villages. They are admirably adapted to the heat of summer, but afford poor protection against the occasional cold winds.

186 361 663 342 The rural Baharna and Arabs live apart in segregated villages, and even in the towns there is a tendency for the different racial and religious groups to form distinct communities. The Bahrain Petroleum Company has created a self-sufficient modern settlement for its British and American employees at Awali, on the edge of the oil field area. The development of modern housing projects is also being promoted by the government, and plans are under consideration for the demolition of certain slum areas and the erection of low-rental dwellings.

ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION

Water Supplies

312 The fame of the sweet-water springs of Bahrain stems from ancient times, and undoubtedly contributed to the early development of Manama as a trading center. No only do abundant sources of water exist in the oases along the northern end of Bahrain